

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method and apparatus for altering the picture updating frequency within an MPEG compressed video data stream replaces the data of each of successive
5 predictively encoded pictures of that data stream, such as all of the B-picture or all of the B-pictures and all of the P-pictures, with copy data which have been stored beforehand in a memory and which designate all of the macroblocks of each such replaced picture as
10 being skipped macroblocks with respect to a corresponding reference picture, thereby ensuring that each such replaced picture will be decoded as a copy of the corresponding reference picture by a MPEG decoder apparatus. Alteration of the picture updating
15 frequency of the stream of pictures expressed by the MPEG data stream can thereby be achieved very simply, while in addition the overall amount of MPEG data can be substantially reduced.

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